

A VETERAN VOLUNTEER STATE SANITARY ASSOCIATION

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This is an account of the life-cycle of the Ohio State Sanitary Association which was born, flourished and died in the decade 1880-1890. The first and only secretary of the Association, R. Harvey Reed, M. D. (1851-1907), truly and fittingly called it at the time of its demise "a veteran volunteer sanitary association."

Few people in Ohio have any knowledge concerning this episode in the history of the state which brought together medical and lay representatives to labor for the creation of a state-wide program of health protection and promotion. This statement is especially true in the present day. We are so accustomed to the multiplicity of local, state and national health organizations which have appeared since the turn of the century that we are prone to assume that nothing existed before their establishment (1).

There is no complete record of the Association to be found anywhere. Broken files of the "Abstract of Proceedings" are held by several libraries (2). Fugitive references are to be found in the medical and sanitary journals of that day. In the early annual reports of the Ohio State Board of Health occasional references to the Association will be found (3). These references are so fleeting that they arouse a natural curiosity to know more about the Association.

The main reasons which brought about the organization of the Association seem to have been three in number. First, the deleterious effects, both socially and commercially, of recurrent epidemics with which the early settlers of Ohio had to struggle; second, the experience of the more populous centers in the state in attempting to curb epidemics and to improve insanitary conditions; and, third, the pressure from neighboring states which had established a state authority to bring order out of chaos.

Beginning with the establishment of the Northwest Territory in 1787 and continuing to the year 1852, the people of Ohio accepted the suffering and death which accompanied the regular appearances of epidemics with more or less fatalistic resignation. No one, not even the physicians, seemed to know what to do to combat them. The ideas, then prevalent, as to the causes of the swift and devastating rise and fall of the epidemic diseases were vague and confused. Practically all of the explanations had reference to the environment—exhalations from swamps or sewers; damp cellars; foul odors; filth; faulty drainage; faulty ventilation; and the changing climate.

In 1852, the Ohio General Assembly passed the first public health organization statute in the history of the State. It permitted cities to establish local boards of health if they so desired. Their chief functions were to abate nuisances and to enforce quarantine and isolation regulations. Further extension of this idea was made in 1875 when townships were permitted to establish local boards of health (4).

After the establishment of the Massachusetts State Board of Health in 1869 the idea of state control of health matters spread rapidly throughout the entire country (5).

Michigan, 1873; Kentucky, 1878; West Virginia, 1881; Indiana, 1881, and Pennsylvania, 1885, established boards modeled along the lines laid down in Massachusetts. Ohio, which did not establish such a board until 1886, was under continual criticism from these surrounding states, particularly West Virginia, because of the natural trend of travel to the east over the National Road and the consequent spread of epidemics from Ohio into that state.

Agitation for the establishment of a State Board of Health in Ohio came from the progressive physicians and laymen of the state. It began in the '70's. The proceedings of the Ohio State Medical Society show the sporadic outcroppings of this agitation during these years (6). No organized attempt at this time, however, was made to create public opinion to bring about such a board.

Early in the '80's R. Harvey Reed, M. D., began the presentation of the general subject of sanitation before the Mansfield Lyceum and Reading Circle. It was here that the idea of the Ohio State Sanitary Association was discussed for the first time. Dr. Reed became the moving spirit in the organization (7).

An editorial written by James F. Baldwin, M. D., editor of the *Columbus Medical Journal*, in January, 1884, gives the first announcement of the organization of the Association:

There will be a Sanitary Convention in this city (Columbus), February 14 and 15. The convention will occupy two days, so as to afford time for the numerous papers that have been promised, and for action on the reports of important committees which will be appointed on the first day. A permanent organization is to be made which shall act as parent to local boards to be organized later in the year.

This proposed organization is designed to take the place, so far as may be, of a State Board of Health, which Ohio ought to, but does not, possess. It is hoped and expected, however, that such a board will be the outgrowth ultimately of the present movement.

A local association at Mansfield, headed by R. Harvey Reed, has initiated the present movement which bids fair to be a remarkable success (8).

In the same issue of the *Journal* the complete program for the two days' Convention is given. The announcement of the meeting is signed by Robert Harvey Reed, M. D., acting secretary, Mansfield, and James F. Baldwin, M. D., Columbus; Charles A. L. Reed, M. D., Hamilton; S. H. Smith, M. D., Warren; Elisha H. Hyatt, M. D., Delaware; and William W. Jones, M. D., Toledo, as a Counseling Committee (9).

The first meeting was held on February 14, 1884, at the Board of Trade, Columbus (10). The meeting was to have begun at 10:00 A. M., but was delayed in convening due to the difficulties delegates experienced in traveling caused by floods all over the state. Dr. J. F. Baldwin presided and welcomed the delegates to the city and the meeting. "The object of the meeting was to educate the people by the diffusion of a more thorough knowledge of the laws of health and the best means to be adopted for the prevention of all preventable diseases, and finally the securing of proper and wise legislation for the support of the same."

Wm. Morrow Beach, M. D., London, was elected temporary chairman and R. Harvey Reed, M. D., Mansfield, temporary secretary.

A Committee on Permanent Organization was then appointed consisting of: James F. Baldwin, M. D., Columbus; Xenophon C. Scott, M. D., Cleveland; Elisha H. Hyatt, M. D., Delaware; Gustavus S. Franklin, M. D., Chillicothe; and Charles A. L. Reed, Hamilton.

The afternoon session was given over to Dr. X. C. Scott, who explained his bill "to establish Boards of Health and Medical Boards of Examiners and Licensers and regulating the practice of medicine and surgery in the State of Ohio and defining the powers and duties of such boards." A lively discussion then ensued, entered into by: Dr. E. H. Hyatt, Delaware; Dr. William J. Conklin, Dayton; Dr. John McCurdy, Youngstown; Dr. C. A. L. Reed, Hamilton; Dr. J. F. Baldwin, Columbus; Dr. R. D. Silver, Sidney; Dr. R. Harvey Reed, Mansfield; Dr. C. E. Beardsley, Ottawa; Dr. David H. Beckwith, Cleveland; Dr. H. J. Sharp, London, and Dr. Gustavus S. Franklin, Chillicothe.

An evening session was held in the hall of the House of Representatives, State House, at which time a general discussion was led by Starling Loving, M. D., Columbus, on the subject, "Resolved, That Legalized State Sanitation has Become a Necessity in the State of Ohio for the General Protection of its Citizens." Members of both houses of the State Legislature were especially invited.

On the morning of February 15, 1884, the report of the Committee on Permanent Organization was made and adopted.

FOR OFFICERS:

President—Wm. Morrow Beach, M. D., London.
First Vice-President—Prof. Edward Orton, Columbus.
Second Vice-President—Prof. E. T. Nelson, Delaware.
Third Vice-President—Hon. L. D. Brown, Hamilton.
Secretary—R. Harvey Reed, M. D., Mansfield.
Treasurer—Prof. John Simpson, Mansfield.

FOR COMMITTEES:

Executive Committee which, ex-officio, includes all the presidents and secretary together with Starling Loving, M. D., Columbus; David H. Beckwith, M. D., Cleveland; William J. Conklin, M. D., Dayton; E. H. Hyatt, M. D., Delaware.

Committee on Publications—R. Harvey Reed, M. D., Mansfield; James F. Baldwin, M. D., Columbus; Geo. A. Collamore, M. D., Toledo.

Committee on Legislation—Wm. Morrow Beach, M. D., ex-officio, London; X. C. Scott, M. D., Cleveland; Charles L. Van Pelt, M. D., Toledo; and C. M. Finch, M. D., Portsmouth.

The Committee also reported on the Constitution and By-Laws as follows:

Name—The Ohio State Sanitary Association.

Object—The general advancement of sanitary science and the encouragement and promotion of local organizations throughout the state.

Members—Active, who shall form the body of the Association and shall be selected with special reference to their interest in sanitary and allied studies.

Honorary, who shall be selected with reference to their general interest only in the work in hand.

Meetings—At least once a year in the month of February and unless some other city is mentioned it will meet in Columbus.

The report was unanimously adopted.

The remainder of the meeting was given over to the reading of papers and discussion, the most important of which for our purposes were: David N. Kinsman, M. D., Columbus, "Some Reasons for the Establishment of a Board of Health;" Lewis C. Slusser, M. D., Canton, "Vital Statistics;" and Wm. Morrow Beach, M. D., London, gave his presidential address on "The Importance of Sanitation" (11).

The pertinent facts about the Association in subsequent years are briefly recorded together with the more important references.

Meetings (12)

- 1st —1884, February 14-15. Board of Trade, Columbus.
- 2nd—1885, February 5- 6. Board of Trade, Columbus.
- 3rd—1886, February 24-25. Board of Trade, Columbus.
- 4th—1887, February 10-11. Board of Trade, Columbus.
- 5th—1888, February 9-10. G. A. R. Hall, Toledo.
- 6th—1888, November 14-15. Assembly Room, City Hall, Canton.
- 7th—1889, November 21-22. Y. M. C. A., Dayton.

Presidents—Listed in year elected.

- 1st —1884. Wm. Morrow Beach, M. D., London.
- 2nd—1885. Edward Orton, LL. D., Columbus.
- 3rd—1886. Henry J. Herrick, M. D., Cleveland.
- 4th—1887. Prof. E. T. Nelson, A. M., Ph. D., Delaware.
- 5th—1888. George C. Ashmun, M. D., Cleveland.
- 6th—1888. David H. Beckwith, M. D., Cleveland.

Secretary

- 1st-7th—1884-1889. R. Harvey Reed, M. D., Mansfield.

The main objective of the Association was reached when on April 14, 1886, the General Assembly of Ohio passed an "Act—To create and establish a State Board of Health in the State of Ohio" (13). Members of the first board appointed by Governor Joseph Benson Foraker on April 23, 1886, were:

W. H. Cretcher, M. D., Bellefontaine; T. Clarke Miller, M. D., Massillon; John D. Jones, M. D., Cincinnati; Simon P. Wise, M. D., Millersburg; David H. Beckwith, M. D., Cleveland; Thomas C. Hoover, M. D., Columbus; H. J. Sharp, M. D., London; and Hon. J. A. Kohler, Attorney General, ex-officio (14). On May 18, 1886, the permanent organization of the board was effected (15).

It will be observed that four of these appointees—Cretcher, Miller, Beckwith and Sharp—had been intimately identified with the Ohio State Sanitary Association. The other three appointees—Jones, Wise and Hoover—had been more or less interested in sanitary matters either locally or through the Ohio State Medical Society.

From the time the State Board of Health was organized until the demise of the Ohio State Sanitary Association on November 22, 1889, there appears to have been decided differences of opinion as to just what place the Association had in the public life of the state. There were also equal difficulties with respect to the Ohio State Medical Society.

An early evidence of this situation is contained in a resolution passed by the State Board of Health to the effect "that no papers shall be published in the Annual Report of this Board, except such as are ordered or approved for purposes of such publication by a majority of the members of the Board; and that any such paper shall be published over the signature of the writer, who is entitled to the credit of its production, as well as responsible for the statement of facts and opinions expressed therein." (16).

Another evidence is contained in the annual address of T. Clarke Miller, M. D., president of the State Board of Health, delivered in Columbus, November 17, 1887:

The tendency to truculent criticism probably reached its climax when an eminent member of the profession, in a meeting of the Ohio State Medical Society, realizing his prominence and influence, bitterly assailed the personnel of the Board, and the motives which ruled in its selection. A resolution which appears in the "subsequent proceedings" indicates the profound impression made by the eloquent assailant of the Board (17).

The subsequent proceedings referred to Dr. H. J. Herrick, who offered the following resolutions, which, on motion of Dr. A. B. Carpenter, were adopted without discussion:

WHEREAS, our legislature has enacted statutes creating a State Board of Health, and in conformity with said enactment, His Excellency, Governor Foraker, has selected men of intelligence, professional skill and integrity for the several positions on said Board; therefore,

Resolved, That the State Medical Society cordially endorses the spirit and labors of the Board of Health in its arduous duties.

Resolved, that we approve, and will individually co-operate with the Board in its purpose to diffuse the principles of sanitary service, by all means proposed, especially by distributing tracts among the people and special meetings for the enlightenment of the people on subjects of sanitary science.

Resolved, That we recommend that the Legislature so increase their power that they can enforce provisions for the maintenance of public health.

Again:

The work of the "State Sanitary Association" is worthy of special consideration on account of its annual contribution of many valuable papers to current sanitary literature; . . .

It is hardly conceivable that self-aggrandizement should be the animus of any considerable proportion of the membership of this association; on the other hand, it cannot be doubted that, in the main, its members are actuated by a desire to promote the best interests of the people; this being the case, it is hoped that some satisfactory way may be found to place the more important of these papers within the reach of the people without expense to the writers . . . (18).

Steps were taken by the Association in 1887 looking toward making it an auxiliary to the State Board of Health. At the November 16, 1887, meeting of the State Board of Health, "a communication was presented from the Secretary of the Ohio State Sanitary Association relative to the publication of papers read before the Association in the annual report of the Board. Dr. Miller stated that at the last meeting of the Association . . . he had informed the Association . . . that the Board would be pleased to publish good papers not published elsewhere. Dr. Beckwith presented a communication from Prof. E. T. Nelson, President of the Sanitary Association. Dr. Nelson had been appointed to the Board in 1888 to succeed Dr. T. Clarke Miller, whose term expired, relative to a joint meeting of the Board and Association . . ." (19).

At the April 19th, 1889, meeting of the State Board of Health "a communication from Dr. Reed, Secretary of the Ohio State Sanitary Association, was read in which was given the action

of the Association in regard to making it auxiliary to the State Board of Health. The matter was referred to a Committee—Prof. E. T. Nelson and Dr. H. J. Sharp—with instructions to report at the next meeting of the Board.” (20).

On June 19, 1889, Prof. Edward T. Nelson submitted a report from the committee appointed to consider the proposal to make the Ohio State Sanitary Association auxiliary to the State Board of Health. He said he had letters from a number of prominent members of the Association and all seemed to favor allowing the Association to come to an end as the State Board of Health could now carry on its work. The committee was not favorable to this proposition, but recommended that the State Board should pledge itself to carry on the work of the Association and hold one annual convention to which all sanitarians should be invited. Dr. W. H. Cretcher, M. D., Bellefontaine, spoke in favor of the report but did not consider it necessary for the Board to pledge itself to hold an annual convention, or to specify how it would carry on the work of the Association. With this amendment he moved the adoption of the report. The motion prevailed (21).

At the meeting of the Association on November 22, 1889, a committee consisting of T. Clarke Miller, M. D., Massillon; R. Harvey Reed, M. D., Mansfield; and Lewis C. Slusser, M. D., Canton, reported. A majority, consisting of Drs. Reed and Slusser, proposed the following resolution:

WHEREAS, The Ohio State Sanitary Association was one of the pioneer organizations of its kind in this country and was organized nearly a decade of years since, for the purpose of “diffusing among the people a greater knowledge of the laws preventing all preventable diseases” and thus secure “proper and wise sanitation, systematically and scientifically administered,” and

WHEREAS, It has by these means been the active power in the creation of a State Board of Health, and has very materially aided in moulding public sentiment until better local sanitary laws have been enacted, and the organization of more effectual local boards of health in support of and in co-operation with the said State Board of Health has been accomplished all over our state; and

WHEREAS, This “Veteran Volunteer Sanitary Association” of the State of Ohio has accomplished all the objects of its organization, and thus having fulfilled in an earnest, active, energetic and faithful manner the purposes for which it was created; therefore

Resolved, That when all the business pertaining to the seventh annual meeting of this Association shall have been accomplished and the said Association is ready for adjournment, that the Ohio State Sanitary Association do then adjourn *sine die*.

A minority report was submitted by T. Clarke Miller, M. D., Massillon, who was chairman of the committee. He offered the following substitute resolution:

WHEREAS, Independence is necessary to the efficiency of this organization,

WHEREAS, "Support" has not been asked, and "co-operation" has not been thought of,

Resolved, That "it would not be well for this Association to merge its efforts into a support of, and a co-operation with, the official forces of the State."

Upon debate George C. Ashmun, M. D., Cleveland, offered an amendment to the majority report which was accepted by Dr. Reed on the part of the committee. The amendment was:

WHEREAS, The State Board of Health has provided for not less than two popular sanitary conventions each year; therefore be it

Resolved, That we request the State Board of Health to arrange for not less than one meeting each year of the various local health officers of the state, and with this understanding, when all the business of the seventh annual meeting of the Ohio State Sanitary Association shall have been transacted, and it is ready for adjournment that it shall stand adjourned *sine die*.

In discussing the report and the amendment Dr. Reed said that "the prime object in organizing the Association had been to get at something definite and tangible in sanitary matters, and as such the result had been the organization of the State Board of Health. He now thought the objects had been accomplished and it was time to turn its labors over to the care and keeping of the Ohio State Board of Health." (22).

The majority report as amended was then unanimously adopted and a motion by Dr. Reed to adjourn *sine die* was carried. After which the members were taken in special cars to the Insane Asylum, where a reception and luncheon had been arranged for them.

And thus the Ohio State Sanitary Association passed into the limbo of all but forgotten episodes in the life of the people of Ohio.

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- (2) The Union List of Serials in Libraries of the U. S. and Canada. The H. W. Wilson Co., New York. First Vol. 1927; supplement 1925-31; supplement July, 1931-December, 1932.

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 - (4) Laws of Ohio, Vol. 50, p. 243, May 3, 1852; Laws of Ohio, Vol. 72, pp. 178-9, March 30, 1875.
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 - (7) For obituary and life see:
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 - (8) *Columbus Medical Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 7, January, 1884, pp. 337-8 (Editorial).
 - (9) *Ibid.*, pp. 339-40 (Program Outline).
 - (10) *Journal of American Medical Association*, Chicago, Vol. 2, No. 9, March 1, 1884, pp. 244-7. (Report of Meeting in full.)
 - (11) Printed in *Journal American Medical Association*, Vol. 2, No. 10, March 8, 1884, pp. 253-6.
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 - (14) First Annual Report, Ohio State Board of Health, 1886, p. 1.
 - (15) *Ohio State Journal*, 1886, April 24, Vol. 47, No. 98, p. 3.
 - (16) Frontispiece in Annual Reports, Ohio State Board of Health, 1886-7-8-9.
 - (17) Transactions Ohio State Medical Society, 1887, June 15-17, p. 15.
 - (18) Second Annual Report, Ohio State Board of Health, 1887, pp. 268-9.
 - (19) Third Annual Report, Ohio State Board of Health, 1888, pp. 18-19.
 - (20) Fourth Annual Report, Ohio State Board of Health, 1889, p. 44.
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 - (21) Fourth Annual Report, Ohio State Board of Health, 1889, pp. 49-50.
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 - (22) Abstract of Proceedings Seventh Annual Meeting, pp. 26-7.

Ice

This intriguing book by Reginald Aldworth Daly, of Harvard, is the written material of the Silliman Lectures which he delivered at Yale University in 1934. The book is concerned with the last ice age, and describes the advance and retreat and various water bodies and changes of water bodies which have taken place during the ice age. There are seven chapters. The first considers the melted ice-caps and the present ice-caps. The second chapter discusses the recession of the Fennos Canadian ice; the third, the recession of the North American ice. In the fourth Daly considers the Mechanism of the Earth's deformation and recoil. Here are taken up the ideas of the effects of the great weight of ice on the geoid of the earth as it pushed down on the continents while the floors of the oceans were unloaded by a layer of sea water some 45 to 50 meters thick. Here we find the punching hypothesis favored over the idea of plastic recoil. The punching hypothesis makes use of a hinge zone at the margins of the ice. The supporting evidence for this hypothesis seems very strong. In chapter five the high sea levels of the Pleistocene are studied and in chapter six the low sea levels are taken up. Chapter seven, which is perhaps the most important problem, deals with Coral Reefs and the Ice Age. Here Daly gives very strong evidence in the Glacial Control Theory for the origin of our present coral reefs. This theory considers that the coral reefs got their start on wave cut platforms which were developed during the low Pleistocene sea levels and which grew up as the seas slowly filled. It is supported by numerous examples and it does not face the many difficulties of the classic theory of Darwin and Dana.

This is an exceedingly scholarly and readable discussion of the Ice Age. The illustrations are excellent, and with a few exceptions, opposite the pages where the discussion concerning them occurs. Some 29 tables summarize various types of data such as ocean temperatures and the like. Every one interested in Pleistocene history will get a new sense of proportions of this changing world. The numerous facts sorted out and used in support of the several theories, give an insight into the magnitude of the problems. There are geologists who will not agree with the author in various aspects of glacial history, but in spite of differences of opinion this is an extremely valuable work and will have many followers.

—WILLARD BERRY.

The Changing World of the Ice Age, by Reginald Aldworth Daly. xxii+271 pp. New Haven, Yale Univ. Press, 1934. \$5.00.